

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Upon careful and complete consideration of the Office Action dated May 14, 2004, applicant has amended the specification and claims which, when considered in conjunction with the comments herein below, are deemed to place the present application into condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully solicited.

The Office Action initially noted that the rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, had been withdrawn based on the amendment of the claim to recite “carbonized polymeric materials”. The Examiner went on to state that “[I]t is understood that this terminology is known in the art to refer to polymeric materials treated with a hydrocarbon monomer such as butadiene to introduce a hydrocarbon layer on the surface of the polymeric material.” Applicant disagrees with this statement. It is respectfully submitted that the word “carbonize” is defined as “to convert into carbon or residue of carbon”, as by the action of heat or some corrosive agent. The Examiner’s attention is directed to Webster’s Third New International Dictionary for support of this definition. The phrase “carbonized polymeric materials” consequently means a material such as carbon fiber made from polyacrylonitrile fiber by carbonization. An example of this is found on page 26, line 12 of the originally filed English specification.

The Office Action then noted that the amendment filed on February 17, 2004 was objected to as introducing new matter. Although it was argued that the amendments were supported by the original Japanese disclosure and that a certified translation thereof would be forthcoming, the Examiner noted that the certified translation had not been received. It is respectfully submitted that said certified translation was filed on February 20, 2004. A postcard acknowledging receipt of said translation by the USPTO on February 24, 2004 was received. We have since received a revised translation of applicant’s priority document.

The initial translation had been rushed in hopes of filing same with the initial response. After filing, the translation was further reviewed by the inventor and translator. Some further typographical errors and mistranslations were found and the attached revised translation of the priority document is respectfully submitted for the Examiner's consideration. Please note that we will be sending a certified copy of the revised translation of the priority document in the near future. Based on said translation, it is respectfully resubmitted that the amendments introduced in applicant's last filed amendment are in deed supported by the original Japanese disclosure and that as such no new matter was added to the subject application. The Examiner's reconsideration of this issue is respectfully solicited.

Based on the above, the objection under 35 U.S.C. §132 is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

Claims 28-39 and 41 -59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response to these rejections, claim 28 has been amended to clearly indicate the ratio being measured and how to measure it. Specifically, step (a) of claim 28 has been amended to read as follows: "subjecting the polymeric material to an activation step for introducing a double bond or a functional group containing at least a carbonyl group on the surface of the polymeric material to the extent that a trace of the formation of the carbonyl group is observed from a ratio of about 0.2 or less of an absorbance at around 1710 cm⁻¹ due to carbonyl groups introduced in the surface of polymeric material to an absorbance of the crystalline region not changed by the activation step by employing a base line method of infrared spectroscopy". Support for this amendment is found in the attached certified translation of the priority document from page 7, line 20 to page 8, line 7.

It is noted that because in the case where the polymeric material is other than polypropylene the absorbance due to carbonyl groups is observed at around 1710 cm⁻¹, the amendment does not constitute new subject matter. It is respectfully submitted that the

claimed ratio should now be clear to the skilled artisan. For instance, in the case of polypropylene, a ratio of the absorbance at around 1710 cm^{-1} due to the carbonyl groups introduced in the polymer to the absorbance at around 973 cm^{-1} due to the methyl groups unchanged in the crystalline region is about 0.2 or less.

Both claims 38 and 39 were amended to more clearly define the claim, i.e. Markush claim language was introduced. Support for the amendment can be found in the attached certified translation on page 14, lines 6-10. Claim 41 was cancelled and claim 45 was amended. The rejection of claim 42 becomes moot in light of the amendment to claim 29.

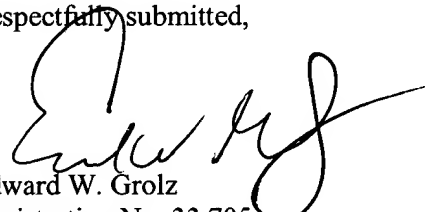
Based on the amendments made to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that 35 U.S.C. §112 requirements are met and the rejection of the claims based thereon is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

With respect to the remaining rejections set forth in the instant Office Action, the claims being rejected, i.e. claims 46-53, 55, 56 and 59, have all been cancelled. Accordingly, the multiple rejections of these claims become moot.

The Examiner noted in the Office Action that claim 28 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the §112 rejections. Applicant has amended the claim 28 in order to satisfy this requirement. The Examiner further noted that claims 29-39, 41-45, 54, 57 and 58 would also be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully submits that this has been accomplished by the amendments noted above.

Consequently, it is submitted that all the claims in the application as presently submitted contain patentable subject matter and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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